

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Contact: Darren Rogers
Senior Director, Communications & Media Services
Churchill Downs Racetrack
(502) 636-4461 (office)
(502) 345-1030 (mobile)
Darren.Rogers@KyDerby.com

IMPROVING FULSOME DEFEATS O BESOS IN GRADE III, \$150,000 MATT WINN

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (Saturday, May 29, 2021) – Juddmonte's rapidly-improving homebred **Fulsome** collected his second straight stakes win as he overcame a sluggish start and rallied to defeat Kentucky Derby fifth-place finisher **O Besos** by 3 ¾ lengths in Saturday's 24th running of the \$150,000 Matt Winn Stakes (Grade III) for 3-year-olds at Churchill Downs.

Fulsome clocked 1 1/16 miles over a fast track in 1:42.88 under **Florent Geroux**, who rode the winner for trainer **Brad Cox**.

Fulsome broke slow in the field of seven and was rated in last down the backstretch as Tampa Bay Derby winner **Helium** dictated the terms through fractions of :23.75, :48.69 and 1:13.26. O Besos tracked from fourth and pulled himself into contention with the leader around the final turn. When O Besos made his move, Fulsome quickly followed from the outside. The two appeared to be poised for a competitive stretch run but when they passed the final furlong marker together Fulsome took off and drew well clear for the win.

"I was pretty confident he could take some dirt in his face and got him to relax early," Geroux said. "I was just hoping they were going fast up front after the slow break. He was able to go past those horses easily to win."

The victory was worth \$91,140 and improved Fulsome's overall record to 7-4-1-0—\$373,854. The 3-year-old is now perfect in three starts on dirt after running on turf in the first four starts of his career. Previously, Fulsome won the \$300,000 Oaklawn Stakes in Arkansas on May 1 by 1 ¼ lengths.

"He had two solid works here at Churchill after winning the Oaklawn Stakes," Cox said. "We were very confident in him by the way he was training. He got off a step slow but he really finished up fast today and was impressive doing so."

Fulsome returned \$5.40, \$2.80 and \$2.40 as the 8-5 favorite. O Besos, ridden by **Marcelino Pedroza Jr.**, returned \$3 and \$2.40 as the 9-5 second choice and finished 1 ¼ lengths in front of Helium who paid \$2.60 to show at odds of 5-2 under **Julien Leparoux**. **Southern Passage** was another half-length back in fourth, and was followed by **Ready to Pounce**, **Game Day Play** and **Sittin On Go**. **Hello Hot Rod** was scratched.

Fulsome, a son of Into Mischief out of the Distorted Humor mare Flourish, was bred in Kentucky by his owners.

The Matt Winn is named in honor of the famed Churchill Downs president that served as the driving force in the development of the Downs and his beloved Kentucky Derby.

GAM'S MISSION WINS GRADE III, \$150,000 REGRET WITH RESOLUTE RALLY

Lazy F Ranch's homebred **Gam's Mission** rallied to defeat favored Spanish Loveaffair by three-quarters of a length in Saturday's 52nd running of the \$150,000 Regret Stakes (Grade III) for 3-year-old fillies at Churchill Downs.

Trained by **Cherie DeVaux** and ridden by **Adam Beschizza**, Gam's Mission covered the 1 1/8 miles on the Matt Winn Turf Course rated "good" in 1:51.02.

In the early stages of the race, Gam's Mission's stablemate **Postnup** and **Spanish Loveaffair** led the field of eight 3-year-old fillies through opening fractions of :24.55 and :49.56 with Gam's Mission rating in fifth. Spanish Loveaffair put away Postnup on the final turn after six furlongs in 1:14.27. In the stretch, Flown drew even with Spanish Loveaffair as Gam's Mission ranged into contention from the outside with a furlong to run. The eventual winner caught Spanish Loveaffair with her resolute rally inside the final yards and edged clear late.

"I was pretty confident with her stepping up to this distance," Beschizza said. "She seems to have a very nice kick. Since she broke her maiden she's really started to put things together. We didn't go quite fast but the pace was a little testing."

Gam's Mission, the 6-1 fourth betting choice, rewarded her backers with payouts of \$14.20, \$5.80 and \$3.80. Spanish Loveaffair, the 7-5 favorite ridden by **Tyler Gaffalione**, returned \$3.40 and \$2.40 and Flown, under **Ricardo Santana Jr.**, paid \$3.

Oyster Box was fourth and was followed by **Barista**, **Munnyfor Ro**, **Line Dancing** and Postnup. **Saranya** was scratched.

With her victory worth \$90,210 in the Regret, Gam's Mission boosted her career earnings to \$201,258 from a record of 3-1-0 in four starts.

Gam's Mission is a daughter of Noble Mission (GB) out of the War Pass mare Auntie Martha and was bred in Kentucky by her owner **Cornelia G. Corbett**, who races as Lazy F Ranch.

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The Regret honors the 1915 Kentucky Derby-winning filly.

The next turf race at Churchill Downs for 3-year-old fillies is the \$150,000 Tepin over one mile on Saturday, June 26.

BANGO SWOOPS FIELD TO WIN \$150,000 ARISTIDES

Tamaroak Partners' homebred colt **Bango** made a gallant stretch run after breaking slow to win Saturday's 33rd running of the \$150,000 Aristides (Listed) at Churchill Downs.

Trained by **Greg Foley** and ridden by **Marcelino Pedroza**, Bango completed the six-furlong Aristides in 1:09.65.

Edgemont Road set a swift early quarter-mile fraction in :21.53. Bango, who battled on the lead in the \$500,000 Churchill Downs (GI) in his previous start, was ninth early after breaking slow. Following a half-mile in :44.97, Bango began his charge at the leaders. In deep stretch, Bango was able to hold off the fast-closing **Long Range Toddy** to win by a half-length.

"After the first eighth mile, you didn't want to be standing near me. I thought that was it," Foley joked. "He broke very slow but he was able to settle and he made a really fast run around the pacesetters. He absolutely loves Churchill Downs and I'm hoping we can get him into another race here before the meet is over."

Bango was the 4-1 third choice in the Aristides and paid \$10.60, \$6.40 and \$4.40. Long Range Toddy, under **Jon Court**, paid \$16.80 and \$10.20. **Sir Alfred James**, who broke on top of the field but tracked just off the early fractions, finished third with jockey **Colby Hernandez** in the irons and returned \$4.40.

Mojo Man, Tough Love, Royal Daaher, Empire of Gold, Haunt, 5-2 favorite Tap It to Win and Edgemont Road completed the running order.

Bango improved his record to 17-6-1-1 with stout purse earnings of \$393,557. Saturday's Aristides win was his fifth from eight starts at Churchill Downs.

The Aristides is named in honor of the inaugural Kentucky Derby winner of 1875.

The next sprint for older horses at Churchill Downs is the \$100,000 Kelly's Landing Overnight Stakes at seven furlongs on Friday, June 25.

MIGHTY HEART PREVAILS IN \$150,000 BLAME THRILLER

Lawrence Cordes' homebred **Mighty Heart**, the second longest shot in the field of six older horses at odds of 9-1, emerged as the nose winner in a three-horse photo with 3-2 favorite **Night Ops** and 9-5 second choice **Sprawl** in Saturday's second running of the \$150,000 Blame Stakes at Churchill Downs.

Trained by **Josie Carroll** and ridden by **James Graham**, Mighty Heart covered the 1 1/8 miles on a fast track in 1:50.00.

American Dubai broke alertly and led the field through soft early fractions of :24.32, :49.07 and 1:13.71 with Mighty Heart in close pursuit and Sprawl just behind those two. After racing near the back, Night Ops commenced a wide rally on the far turn as American Dubai kicked clear to a 1 1/2-length advantage.

Inside the final sixteenth of a mile, American Dubai was weary and began to fade as Mighty Heart charged between Night Ops, who was on the outside, and Sprawl, who was inside. The trio hit the wire together with Mighty Heart a nose victor over Night Ops and Sprawl another head back in third. American Dubai finished another two lengths back in fourth.

"He's got a big heart that goes with his name," Graham said. "He's a very tough individual. Every time he had a horse that came alongside of him in deep stretch he wanted to stick his neck out to make sure he was still in front. I'm very grateful for the opportunity to ride such a gutsy horse like this."

The victory was worth \$92,070 and increased Mighty Heart's bankroll to \$797,759 with a record of 4-0-2 in 10 starts. Last year as a 3-year-old, Mighty Heart won the \$760,633 Queen's Plate at Woodbine and \$299,163 Prince of Wales at Fort Erie, the first two legs of the Canadian Triple Crown.

Mighty Heart returned \$21.40, \$7.20 and \$3.60. Night Ops, ridden by **Florent Geroux**, paid \$3 and \$2.10. Sprawl, under **Brian Hernandez Jr.**, paid \$2.40 to show.

After American Dubai in fourth, **South Bend** and **Guest Suite** completed the order of finish. **Silver Dust** was scratched after acting up in the gate prior to the start.

Mighty Heart is a 4-year-old Ontario-bred son of Dramedy out of the City Place mare Emma's Bullseye.

The Blame, named after the 2010 Eclipse Award-winning older horse that handed Zenyatta her lone defeat in that year's Breeders' Cup Classic (GI) at Churchill Downs, could serve as a steppingstone to the \$600,000 Stephen Foster (Grade II) for 4-year-olds and up at 1 1/8 miles on Saturday, June 26.

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ENVOUTANTE SCORES AS 2-5 FAVORITE IN \$150,000 SHAWNEE

Three Chimenys Farm and **Walking L Thoroughbreds'** Envoutante powered past **Miss Bigly** in deep stretch to win Saturday's second running of the \$150,000 Shawnee Stakes at Churchill Downs.

Trained by **Kenny McPeck**, Envoutante covered 1 1/16 miles in 1:42.59 under jockey **Brian Hernandez Jr.**

Envoutante was relegated just off of Miss Bigly's early pace fractions of :24.14, :48.20 and 1:12.15. Hernandez and Envoutante overtook Miss Bigly at the eighth pole for a 4 1/4-length victory.

"She set herself up well throughout the race and was much the best," Hernandez said. "She looked at the grandstand a little bit but was getting by (Miss Bigly) easily."

There was a trainer's objection by Miss Bigly's conditioner **Phil D'Amato** for interference in the stretch but it was disallowed.

Envoutante was the heavy 2-5 post time favorite and returned \$2.80, \$2.20 and \$2.10. Miss Bigly, under **Martin Garcia**, returned \$5 and \$2.80. **Paris Lights**, with **Tyler Gaffalione** aboard, finished third and paid \$2.60.

High Regard, **Microcap**, **Istan Council**, **La Renoleta (ARG)** and **Goodbye Earl** rounded out the order of finish.

Envoutante is a 4-year-old filly by **Uncle Mo** out of the **Bluegrass Cat** mare **Enchante**. She was bred in Kentucky by **Jumping Jack Racing**.

With her victory in Saturday's Shawnee, Envoutante improved her record to 12-5-2-2 with earnings of \$541,738.

The Shawnee Stakes, named after the neighborhood in western Louisville, is the local prep race for the \$300,000 Fleur de Lis (GII) on June 26 at Churchill Downs. The Fleur de Lis is a "Win and You're In" event for the Longines Breeders' Cup Distaff (GI) on Nov. 6 at Del Mar.

"She does well with a confidence booster," McPeck said. "She ran hard last out and I'd like to win a Grade I with her down the road. I'm known for more ambitious spots but I thought this race set her up for the Fleur de Lis. She loves this racetrack and once she's learned to win she's gotten better. I'm going to try and keep (multiple Grade I winner **Swiss Skydiver** and Envoutante) separated and hopefully they both end up in the Breeders' Cup at the end of the year."

CALUMET FARM'S CELLIST WIRES FIELD IN \$150,000 AUDUBON

In a race devoid of early speed, **Calumet Farm's** homebred **Cellist** led every step of the way to win Saturday's second running of the \$150,000 Audubon Stakes for 3-year-olds at Churchill Downs by three-quarters of a length over **Palazzi**.

Cellist, ridden by **Julien Leparoux** and trained by **Rusty Arnold**, ran 1 1/8 miles over "good" turf in 1:51.53.

Breaking from post five in the field of seven, Cellist set dawdling early fractions of :25.54, :51.20 and 1:16.12. **Royal Prince** drew within a length at the top of the stretch but Cellist widened his lead in the stretch and withstood a late charge from Palazzi.

"In his last start he didn't get away from the gate that well," Arnold said. "Today, he got away great and settled into a nice rhythm the entire way around there. I thought he ran great races in all three of his prior starts. He had trouble in his first start and his last race. He put it all together today."

Sent to post as the 5-2 second choice, Cellist paid \$7.60, \$4.80 and \$3.20. Palazzi, under **Tyler Gaffalione**, returned \$4 and \$2.80. Royal Prince was another 2 1/2 lengths back in third under **Florent Geroux** and paid \$2.60 to show.

"I knew we were in trouble when I saw the half-mile time," said Palazzi's assistant trainer **David Carroll**. "(Cellist) had a pretty easy lead up front and we ran a good effort but just too much to do with the soft pace."

Hidden Enemy (IRE), 2-1 favorite **Like the King**, **Holy Vow** and **Cave Hill** completed the order of finish. **Haddassah** was scratched.

Cellist earned \$91,140 for the win and improved his career record to 4-2-1-0—\$131,740.

Cellist, a son of Big Blue Kitten out of the English Channel mare Cello, was bred in Kentucky by his owner **Brad Kelley**, who heads Calumet Farm.

The Audubon, named after the nearby Louisville neighborhood, could serve as a prep for the \$150,000 War Chant for 3-year-olds at one mile on turf on Saturday, June 26.

SET PIECE (GB) ROMPS IN INAUGURAL DOUGLAS PARK OVERNIGHT STAKES

Juddmonte's homebred **Set Piece (GB)** collected his second straight overnight stakes at Churchill Downs when he swooped past the pacesetter **Gray's Fable** at the final furlong pole and easily drew off to win Saturday's inaugural running of the \$85,500 Douglas Park Overnight Stakes by a geared-down four lengths over **Ramsey Solution**.

Ridden by **Florent Geroux** and trained by **Brad Cox**, Set Piece (GB) ran 1 1/16 miles over “good” turf in 1:44.33.

Set Piece (GB) was away slow and was well-back in sixth early on as Gray’s Fable was loose on the lead setting fractions of :24.02, :48.47 and 1:13.33. Leaving the final turn, Set Piece (GB) easily began to close into the field from the outside, and down the stretch the only question left to be answered was the margin of victory.

“With a horse like him, I wasn’t too worried when we broke slow,” Geroux said. “He likes to get into his own rhythm. We relaxed and when it was ready to make the run, he did it on his own. He was ready to go today.”

Set Piece (GB), sent to post as the 6-5 favorite, paid \$4.40, \$2.60 and \$2.20. Ramsey Solution, the 5-2 second choice under **Julien Leparoux**, returned \$3.40 and \$2.40. **Another Mystery** was another length back in third under **Tyler Gaffalione** and paid \$4 to show.

Gray’s Fable, **Parlor**, **Artemus Eagle** and **Pioneer Spirit** completed the order of finish. **Split the Wickets** and **Logical Myth** were scratched.

Set Piece (GB), who previously won the \$105,734 Opening Verse Overnight Stakes on April 29, earned \$45,570 for the win and improved his career record to 15-8-1-1—\$257,044. He has three wins in four starts over the Matt Winn Turf Course.

“I think he is rounding into top form this year,” Cox said. “We really thought highly of him when he arrived from Europe but I think now he’s just finding his best stride. He has a pretty quick turn of foot and when Florent asked him to go he cruised.”

Set Piece (GB), a son of Dansili (GB) out of the Kingmambo mare Portodora, was bred in Great Britain by his owners.

The Douglas Park, named after a nearby Louisville neighborhood, is a local prelude to the \$300,000 Wise Dan (Grade II) for 4-year-olds and up at 1 1/16 miles on turf on Saturday, June 26.

AUDUBON QUOTES

Rusty Arnold, trainer of CELLIST (winner): “In his last start he didn’t get away from the gate that well. Today, he got away great and settled into a nice rhythm the entire way around there. I thought he ran great races in all three of his prior starts. He had trouble in his first start and his last race. He put it all together today.”

David Carroll, assistant trainer of PALAZZI (runner-up): “I knew we were in trouble when I saw the half-mile time (:51.20). (Cellist) had a pretty easy lead up front and we ran a good effort but just too much to do with the soft pace.”

BLAME QUOTES

James Graham, jockey of MIGHTY HEART (winner): “He’s got a big heart that goes with his name. He’s a very tough individual. Every time he had a horse that came alongside of him in deep stretch he wanted to stick his neck out to make sure he was still in front. I’m very grateful for the opportunity to ride such a gutsy horse like this.”

Florent Geroux, jockey of NIGHT OPS (runner-up): “He was closing well and just got beat.”

Tommy Drury, trainer of SPRAWL (third): “He ran a huge race today after getting away slow. We had planned to be on or near the lead with his speed and Brian (Hernandez Jr.) had to go to a different plan after the break but we’re very proud how well he overcame that.”

SHAWNEE QUOTES

Brian Hernandez Jr., jockey of ENVOUTANTE, winner – “She set herself up throughout the race and was much the best. She looked at the grandstand a little bit but was getting by (Miss Bigly) easily. She went on to do her job and today was the fact she was the best horse in the race. Last time (in the Grade I La Troienne) against Shedaresthedevil she drew the rail and was second best that day. Kenny and his team had her ready to go.”

Kenny McPeck, trainer of ENVOUTANTE, winner – “She does well with a confidence booster. She ran hard last out and I’d like to win a Grade I with her down the road. I’m known for more ambitious spots but I thought this race set her up for the Fleur de Lis (GII). She loves this racetrack and once she’s learned to win she’s gotten better. I’m going to try and keep (multiple Grade I winner Swiss Skydiver and Envoutante) separated and hopefully they both end up in the Breeders’ Cup at the end of the year.”

REGRET QUOTES

Adam Beschizza, jockey of GAM'S MISSION (winner): "I was pretty confident with her stepping up to this distance. She seems to have a very nice kick. Since she broke her maiden she's really started to put things together. We didn't go quite fast but the pace was a little testing."

Cherie DeVaux, jockey of GAM'S MISSION (winner): "I'm very pleased with her effort today. Adam had her in a really good position throughout. She was a little green coming up the stretch but she's lightly raced and still figuring it out. The Triple Tiara (in New York) is definitely on the table; it would be great to go compete in that."

MATT WINN QUOTES

Florent Geroux, jockey of FULSOME (winner): "I was pretty confident he could take some dirt in his face and got him to relax early. I was just hoping they were going fast up front after the slow break. He was able to go past those horses easily to win."

Brad Cox, trainer of FULSOME (winner): "He had two solid works here at Churchill after winning the Oaklawn Stakes. We were very confident in him by the way he was training. He got off a step slow but he really finished up fast today and was impressive doing so."

Marcelino Pedroza, jockey of O BESOS (runner-up): "He was moving pretty well up the backstretch and (Sittin On Go) got pretty rank and got to the inside of us. He was moving on his own around the turn."

ARISTIDES QUOTES

Marcelino Pedroza, jockey of BANGO (winner) – "We broke slow from the gate but I was able to get him to settle nicely. He came home great and was really impressive."

Greg Foley, trainer of BANGO (winner) – "After the first eighth mile, you didn't want to be standing near me because I thought that was it. He broke very slow but he was able to settle and he made a really fast run around the pacesetters. He absolutely loves Churchill Downs and I'm hoping we can get him into another race here before the meet is over."

Dallas Stewart, trainer of LONG RANGE TODDY (runner-up) – "He tried hard and ran a solid effort."

DOUGLAS PARK OVERNIGHT STAKES QUOTES

Florent Geroux, jockey of SET PIECE (winner): "With a horse like him, I wasn't too worried when we broke slow. He likes to get into his own rhythm. We relaxed and when it was ready to make the run, he did it on his own. He was ready to go today."

Brad Cox, trainer of SET PIECE (winner): "I think he is rounding into top form this year. We really thought highly of him when he arrived from Europe but I think now he's just finding his best stride. He has a pretty quick turn of foot and when Florent asked him to go he cruised."

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